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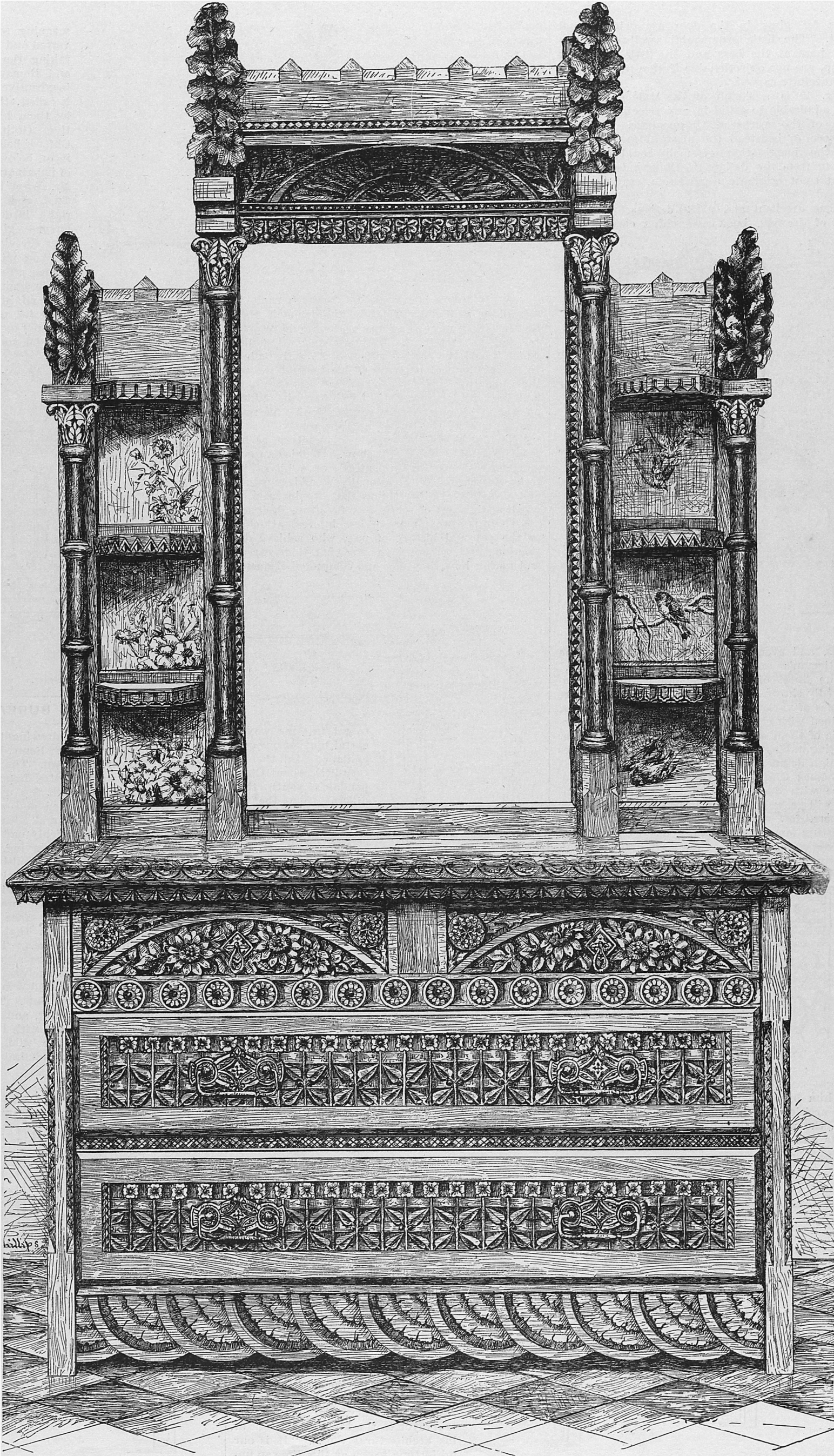
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DRESSING BUREAU, CARVED BY MRS. BENN PITMAN, CINCINNATI SCHOOL OF DESIGN.—For Description see page 188.

frames for glass in the door are original and quaint. The little ornamental scrollwork introduced here at the base and the little canopy at the top, are not objectionable if they were simply and gracefully carved.

Fig. 10 is a sketch of the style of thing I think admirable to avoid in any selection or imitation of the works of Chippendale. It is the canopy of a bedstead the most hideous perhaps that the imagination of man could conceive. Judging from the designs in Chippendale's book, he could not originate a good sofa, easy chair, or bedstead.

Some excellent and useful designs for screens, chests of drawers, book-cases, china closets, linen

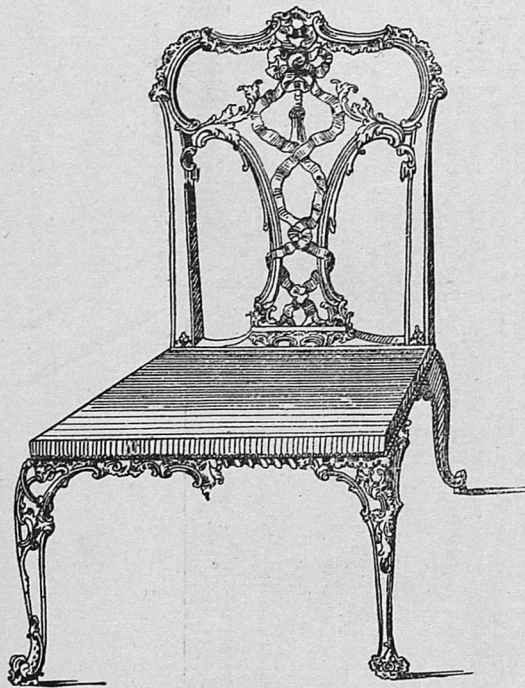


FIGURE SIX.

presses, and even tea caddies, are given in the "Gentleman's and Cabinet Makers' Directory," but the finest of all Chippendale's work was undoubtedly shown in this design, and manufacture of tables of various sorts. Strength and firmness, combined with elegance and simplicity, are characteristic of them all. I give at Fig. 11 a design for a writing table, which exhibits all these qualities in a high degree.

Thomas Chippendale must ever exert an influence with designers; and the strength of his work will grow greater as it becomes older. Few designers, few workers in his field have secured the lasting fame that certainly has come to him.

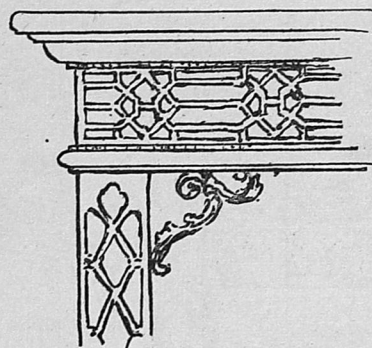


FIGURE SEVEN.

we might say, too, a permanent one. Injustice is done him by crediting to his hands all the fantastic articles bearing his name; they were, no doubt, the work of his children, possibly of his assistants and those learning under him.

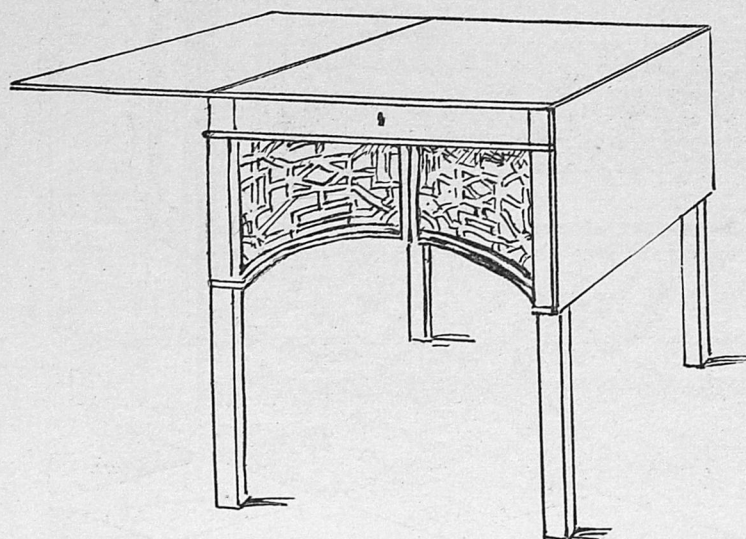


FIGURE EIGHT.

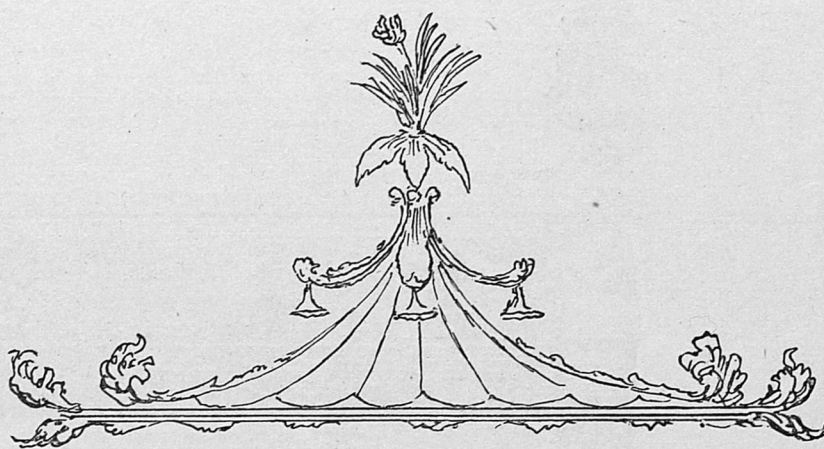


FIGURE TEN.

As his orders increased and business came in so rapidly, as it did ultimately, the demands upon his time were more than any worker could respond to, and yet retain the freshness and originality which marks the earliest efforts of an active mind. In the mechanical portions of his tasks, however, the same care and close attention was shown as had been his characteristic heretofore, the falling off was in his ever novelty-seeking brain, his restless desire after the "new" and the pretty.

Nor did he confine himself to furniture, as his great mass of sketches will show. He filled an odd moment with architectural pieces, or a bit of interior decoration, or, occasionally, a carriage-frame, and a variety of other things that would seem to us altogether out of scope of a furniture designer.

There is always more or less interest attached to the personal history of men who achieve distinction; and we hope, by studying their career, and noting how they met and conquered obstacles,

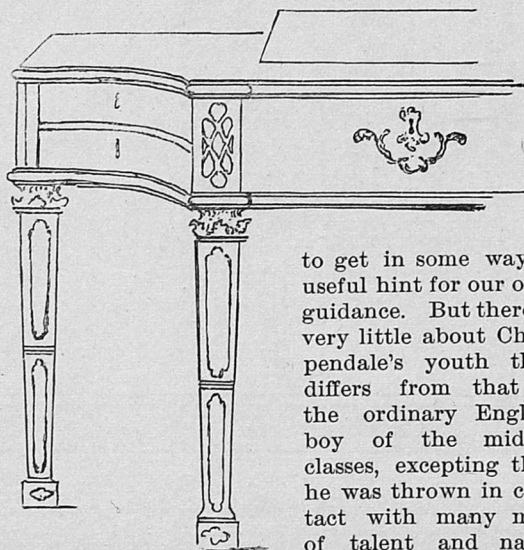


FIGURE ELEVEN.

doubt, created in the young man a disposition to raise his trade to the dignity of an art, and he sacrificed his skill as a carver to his love of designing.

A writer in a recent number of the *Cabinet Maker*, concludes a somewhat fault-finding criticism on Chippendale in the following strain:

"I can admire, from a business point of view, the man who can press anything into his service, from a single piece of fret to a pagoda; but I cannot agree with those who say that such a one is never either vulgar or commonplace. The fact is, that Chippendale did the best he could to increase his business, just as the majority do now; and he would allow his fancy to run riot if thereby his returns could be increased. He puts the matter very candidly—although rather conceitedly—when he says: 'In executing many of these drawings my pencil has but faintly carried out those images my fancy suggested; but in this failure I console myself by reflecting that the greatest masters of every art have labored under the same difficulty.' Looking at some of the enrichments which he produced we may, I think, be thankful that his pencil did but 'faintly carry out the images his fancy suggested.' What would the unfettered ideas of Chippendale have been had his pencil been sufficiently vigorous!"

It may be asked whether this adverse view of the style in which he worked was never expressed in his time. It is some satisfaction to me to be able to say that it was, for his contemporary, Mr. Isaac Ware, 'surveyor to the king,' says in one of his architectural works, "It is our misfortune to see at this time an un-

meaning scrawl of C.'s inverted and hooped together, taking the place of Greek and Roman elegance, even inexpensive decorations. It is called 'the French,' and let them have praise of it; the Gothic shafts and Chinese bells are not beyond it or below it in poorness of imagination." Thus wrote Mr. Ware in Chippendale's time, and he was, I think right, in deploring the preference given to Rococo over the classic.

You might think, gentlemen, after listening to this tirade against Chippendale,

that I should conclude by advising you to have nothing to do with him or his productions; but such advice I am certainly not prepared to give. Indeed, I cordially recommend you to study every specimen of his skill."

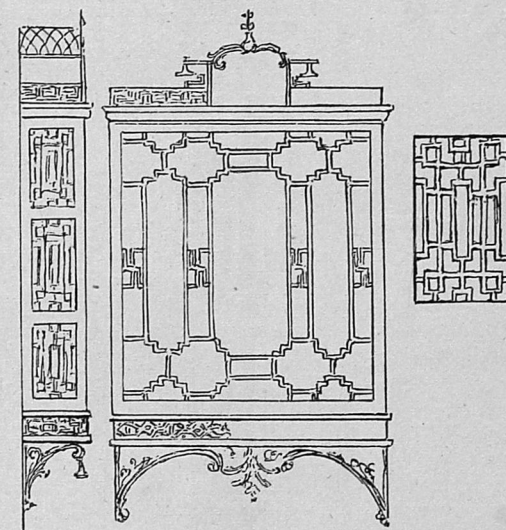


FIGURE NINE.

DRESSING BUREAU.

THE illustration of a dressing bureau, on page 187, is a design by Mr. Benn Pitman, of the Cincinnati School of Design. The carving and oil painting is the work of Mrs. Benn Pitman. The bureau is somewhat over the usual size; it is of black walnut, darkened and enriched with a stain of dragon's blood and alcohol, then hard finished. The top is of richly mottled wood, with a broad band of surface carving. The drawers, the interiors of which are of polished oak, run on wooden rollers, and are handled with extreme ease. The design combines elegance with convenience, and the decoration, though elaborate, is not overdone. The cutting on the face of the upper drawers is one inch relief, that on the lower drawers one half inch relief. The end panels, not shown in the design, are also richly carved. The panels, back of the shelves, are painted in oil; the subjects, summer and winter, are treated in subdued and delicate tints. The supporting pillars are of French walnut, and the capitals, of conventional foliage, are cut with taste and spirit. The foliated finals are the wild parsnip and a variety of Ceylon fern, admirably adapted to decorative use.

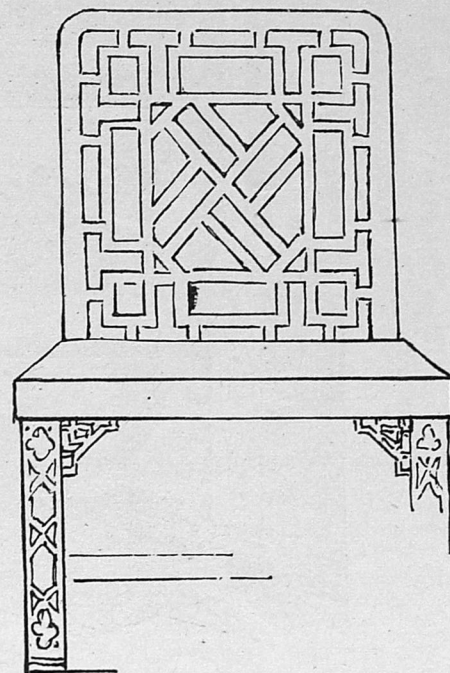


FIGURE TWELVE.